Case3:11-cv-00516-MEJ Document1 Filed02/02/11 Page1 of 12 CIVIL COVER SHEET

[®] JS 44 (Rev. 12/07) (CAND Rev 1/10)

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating

the civil docket sheet. (SEE INST	RUCTIONS ON PAGE TV	VO OF THE FORM	.)									
I. (a) PLAINTIFFS	DEFENDANTS											
David Johnson				MMI Proper	MMI Properties, LLC							
V VIIIIOII				Mini Hoperdes, LLC								
				County of Posidence of First Listed Defendant								
(b) County of Residence of First Listed Plaintiff Contra Costa				County of Residence of First Listed Defendant Contra Costa (IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES ONLY)								
(EXCEPT IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES)				NOTE: IN LAND CONDEMNATION CASES, USE THE LOCATION OF THE LAND INVOLVED.								
(c) Attorney's (Firm Name, Address, and Telephone Number)				Attorneys (If Known)								
Thomas N. Stewart, III				C11-516MG								
369 Blue Oak Lane				1,1/-3/4/11/00								
Clayton, Ca 94517												
(925) 672-8452												
II. BASIS OF JURISDICTION (Place an "X" in One Box Only)				III. CITIZENSHIP OF PRINCIPAL PARTIES (Place an "X" in One Box for Plaintiff (For Diversity Cases Only) and One Box for Defendant)								
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2 U.S. Government 4 Diversity (Indicate Citizenship of Parties in Item III)		Citizen of Another State 2 2 Incorporated and Principal Place 5 5 5 of Business In Another State										
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VII CALIGRAPIA	Cite the U.S. Civil St	tatute under which	you are f	iling (Do not cite j	urisdictio	onal statu	ites unless diversity	y):				
VI. CAUSE OF ACTION	Brief description of o	cause:										
	ADA Title III											
VII. REQUESTED IN CHECK IF THIS IS A CLASS ACTION DEMAND \$ CHECK YES only if demanded in complain COMPLAINT: UNDER F.R.C.P. 23 CHECK YES only if demanded in complain COMPLAINT: UNDER F.R.C.P. 23 DEMAND: □ Yes ■ No												
VIII. RELATED CASE(S) IF ANY PLEASE REFER TO CIVIL L.R. 3-12 CONCERNING REQUIREMENT TO FILE "NOTICE OF RELATED CASE".												
IX. DIVISIONAL ASSIGNMENT (CIVIL L.R. 3-2) (PLACE AND "X" IN ONE BOX ONLY) SAN FRANCISCO/OAKLAND SAN JOSE EUREKA												
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THOMAS N. STEWART, III - #88128 ATTORNEY AT LAW 369 BLUE OAK LANE, 2nd FLOOR CLAYTON, CA 94517 TELEPHONE (925) 672-8452 TELEFAX (925) 673-1729 E-MAIL t_stew_3@yahoo.com Attorneys for David Johnson

FILED

FEB 2 2011/

RICHARD W. WIEKING CLERK, U.S. DISTRICT COURT NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

ORIGINAL

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

MEJ

NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

CV11

0516

DAVID JOHNSON,

Plaintiff,

v.

MMI PROPERTIES, LLC,

Civil Rights

COMPLAINT FOR PRELIMINARY AND PERMANENT INJUNCTIVE RELIEF AND DAMAGES: DENIAL OF CIVIL RIGHTS AND PUBLIC FACILITIES TO PHYSICALLY DISABLED PERSONS (CIVIL CODE §§ 51, ET SEQ.; INJUNCTIVE RELIEF PER TITLE III, AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990

Defendant.

Plaintiff, David Johnson, alleges:

FIRST CLAIM FOR RELIEF: DAMAGES AND INJUNCTIVE RELIEF FOR DENIAL OF FULL AND EQUAL ACCESS TO A PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION: PUBLIC FACILITIES AT A RESTAURANT (Civil Code §§ 51, et seq.)

1. David Johnson is a C5/6 quadriplegic as the result of an accident. He does not have the use of his legs, and has limited use of his hands, and is a "person with a disability" and

Complaint

"physically handicapped person". Plaintiff requires the use of a wheelchair for locomotion and is either unable to use portions of public facilities which are not accessible to disabled persons who require the use of a wheelchair or is only able to use such portions with undue difficulty.

- The "Cheese Steak Shop" (the Restaurant) is a restaurant located at 3478 Clayton Road,
 Concord, California and is open to the public. Defendant owns the real property where the
 Restaurant is located.
- 3. Summary of facts: This case involves the denial of access to Plaintiff and others similarly situated at the Restaurant on January 23, 2011. Plaintiff was denied equal protection of the law and was denied Civil Rights under both California law and federal law, as below described because the parking lot that serves it has no accessible parking and because the toilet is too far away from each wall to be accessible, which made the Restaurant not properly accessible to Plaintiff and to others similarly situated. Plaintiff seeks injunctive relief to require Defendant to correct those barriers, to comply with ADAAG and the CBC where required, to remove all barriers to access in the Restaurant which are readily achievable, to make all reasonable accommodations in policy in order to enable Plaintiff and others similarly situated to use the Restaurant and at minimum, to use readily achievable alternative methods to enable Plaintiff to use the goods and services which the Restaurant makes available to the non-disabled public. Plaintiff also seeks the recovery of damages for his personal damages involved in the discriminatory experiences on January 23, 2011, and seeks recovery of reasonable attorney's fees and litigation expenses and costs according to statute.
- 4. Jurisdiction: This Court has jurisdiction of this action pursuant to 28 USC § 1331 for violations of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 USC 12101 et seq. Pursuant to supplemental

jurisdiction, attendant and related causes of action arising from the same facts are also brought under California law, including but not limited to violations of California Civil Code §§ 51, et seq.

- 5. Venue: Venue is proper in this Court pursuant to 28 USC 1391(b) and is founded on the fact that the location where Plaintiff experienced his discrimination is located in this district and that Plaintiff's causes of action arose in this district.
- 6. Intradistrict: This case should be assigned to the San Francisco intradistrict because the incident occurred in, and Plaintiff's rights arose in, the San Francisco intradistrict.
- 7. The Restaurant is a "public accommodation or facility" subject to the requirements of California Civil Code § 51, et seq.
- 8. Placeholder.
- 9. Defendants are and were the owners, operators, managers, lessors and lessees of the subject
 Restaurant at all times relevant herein. Plaintiff is informed and believes that each of the
 Defendants is and was the agent, employee or representative of each of the other Defendants, and
 performed all acts and omissions stated herein within the scope of such agency or employment or
 representative capacity and is responsible in some manner for the acts and omissions of the other
 Defendants in proximately causing the damages complained of herein.
- 10. Plaintiff and others similarly situated are disabled persons who are mobility impaired and are unable to use public facilities on a "full and equal" basis unless each such facility is in compliance with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the regulations thereof.

 Under Civil Code §§ 51, et seq., Defendants were required to comply with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the federal regulations adopted pursuant thereto. The acts and omissions of which Plaintiff complains took place at the Restaurant.

- 11. Civil Code §§ 51, et seq., were enacted to prohibit discrimination against people with disabilities and to encourage the full and free use by people with disabilities of public facilities and other public places. CC §§ 51, se seq. state that a violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 is a "violation of this section"; CC § 52 states that minimum damages for discrimination are \$4,000 for each incidence of discrimination.
- 12. Health & Safety Code § 19955 was enacted "To ensure that public accommodations or facilities constructed in this state with private funds adhere to provisions of Chapter 7 (commencing with § 4450) of Division 5 of Title 1 of the Government Code." Such public accommodations include those which are the subject of this action. On information and belief, Title 24 California Code of Regulations, formerly known as the California Administrative Code, was in effect at the time of construction and of each alteration of work, all of which occurred after July 1, 1982, thus requiring access complying with the specifications of title 24 for all such construction and for each such "alteration, structural repair or addition".
- 13. The Restaurant's parking lot has no accessible parking. Inside the Restaurant, the toilet is too far from both walls to be accessible to people in wheelchairs. On January 23, 2011, Plaintiff patronized the Restaurant. When he did so, he had no choice but to park in an inaccessible parking space. Inside the Restaurant, after ordering his sandwich, he went to use the men's restroom to urinate, but discovered that because of the inaccessible spacing, he was unable to transfer to the toilet, and was thus unable to use it. When Plaintiff left the Restaurant, another vehicle had parked next to his, forcing his wife to back out of the parking space before Plaintiff could enter his vehicle. Thus, Plaintiff encountered each of the above-described barriers, and experienced difficulty, discomfort or embarrassment because of them.

14. Defendant's failure to remove the barriers as aforesaid, remove all readily achievable barriers, institute policies in furtherance of accessibility or at least have an alternate policy to enable Plaintiff to use the goods and services offered to the non-disabled public without having to suffer the indignities, as aforesaid, was a violation of the California Restaurant Code, the Americans with Disabilities Act and federal regulations adopted pursuant thereto, and as a consequence, was a violation of Civil Code §§ 51, et seq.

15. Injunctive relief: Plaintiff seeks injunctive relief to prohibit the acts and omissions by

Defendant at the Restaurant as stated above which appear to be continuing, and which have the effect of discriminating against Plaintiff based on his disability. Plaintiff will continue to patronize the Restaurant. Such acts and omissions are the cause of humiliation and inconvenience of Plaintiff in that these actions continue to treat Plaintiff as inferior and second class citizens and serve to discriminate against Plaintiff on the sole basis that he is a person with disabilities. Plaintiff is unable so long as such acts and omissions of Defendant continue, to achieve equal access to and use of this public facility. The acts of Defendant have proximately caused and will continue to cause irreparable injury to Plaintiff if not enjoined by this Court.

16. Damages: As a result of the denial of equal access to the Restaurant and due to the acts and omissions of Defendants and each of them in owning, operating and/or leasing the Restaurant, Plaintiff suffered a violation of Civil Rights including but not limited to rights under Civil Code §§ 51, et seq., and suffered mental and emotional distress, all to Plaintiff's damages. Defendant's actions and omissions to act constituted discrimination against Plaintiff on the sole basis that Plaintiff was physically disabled and unable to use the facilities on a full and equal basis as other persons. Plaintiff seeks the minimum damages of \$4,000 pursuant to CC § 52, et seq.

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17. Fees and costs: As a result of Defendant's acts, omissions and conduct, Plaintiff has been required to incur attorney's fees, litigation expenses, and costs as provided by statute, in order to enforce Plaintiff's rights and to enforce provisions of the law protecting access for disabled persons and prohibiting discrimination against disabled persons. Plaintiff therefore seeks recovery of all reasonable attorney's fees and costs, pursuant to the provisions of Civil Code §§ 52. Additionally, Plaintiff's lawsuit is intended not only to obtain compensation for damages to Plaintiff, but also to force the Defendants to make their facilities accessible to all disabled members of the public, justifying "public interest" attorney's fees, litigation expenses and costs pursuant to Code of Civil Procedure § 1021.5.

18. Wherefore, Plaintiff asks this Court to preliminarily and permanently enjoin any continuing refusal by Defendants to comply with the requirements of the California Building Code, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and regulations adopted pursuant thereto with respect to access of disabled persons to the Restaurant; for statutory damages and attorneys' fees pursuant to CC § 52.

SECOND CLAIM FOR RELIEF: VIOLATION OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990 42 USC §§ 12101 FF

19. Plaintiff realleges the allegations of paragraphs 1-18 hereof.

20. Pursuant to law, in 1990 the United States Congress made findings per 42 USC §12101 regarding physically disabled persons, finding that laws were needed to more fully protect "some 43 million Americans [with] one or more physical or mental disabilities"; that "historically society has tended to isolate and segregate individuals with disabilities"; and that "such forms of discrimination against individuals with disabilities continue to be a serious and pervasive social

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problem"; that "the Nation's proper goals regarding individuals with disabilities are to assure equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living and economic self sufficiency for such individuals"; and that "the continuing existence of unfair and unnecessary discrimination and prejudice denies people with disabilities the opportunity to compete on an equal basis and to pursue those opportunities for which our free society is justifiably famous ..."

21. Congress stated as its purpose in passing the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 USC §12101(b)):

It is the purpose of this act

- (1) to provide a clear and comprehensive national mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities;
- (2) to provide clear, strong, consistent, *enforceable standards* addressing discrimination against individuals with disabilities;
- (3) to ensure that the Federal government plays a central role in enforcing the standards established in this act on behalf of individuals with disabilities; and
- (4) to invoke the sweep of Congressional authority, including the power to enforce the 14th Amendment and to regulate commerce, in order to address the major areas of *discrimination faced day to day* by people with disabilities (emphasis added).
- 22. As part of the Americans with Disabilities Act, Public Law 101-336 (hereinafter the "ADA"), Congress passed "Title III Public Accommodations and Services Operated by Private Entities" (42 USC 12181 ff). Among "private entities" which are considered "public accommodations" for purposes of this Title is an office Restaurant (Regulation 36.104).
- 23. Pursuant to §302, 42 USC §12182, "No individual shall be discriminated against on the basis of disability in the full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages or accommodations of any place of public accommodation by any person who owns, leases or leases to, or operates a place of public accommodation."

24. Among the specific prohibitions against discrimination were included: §12182(b)(2)(A)(ii):

"A failure to make reasonable modifications in policies, practices or procedures when such modifications are necessary to afford such goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages or accommodations to individuals with disabilities ..."; §12182(b)(A)(iii): "a failure to take such steps as may be necessary to ensure that no individual with a disability is excluded, denied service, segregated, or otherwise treated differently than other individuals because of the absence of auxiliary aids and services ..."; §12182(b)(A)(iv): "A failure to remove architectural barriers and communication barriers that are structural in nature, in existing facilities ... where such removal is readily achievable"; §12182(b)(A)(v): "Where an entity can demonstrate that the removal of a barrier under clause (iv) is not readily achievable, a failure to make such goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or accommodations available through alternative methods if such methods are readily achievable". The acts and omissions of Defendants set forth herein were in violation of Plaintiff's rights under the ADA, Public Law 101-336, and the regulations promulgated thereunder, 28 CFR Part 36ff.

- 25. The removal of each of the barriers complained of by Plaintiff as hereinabove alleged, was at all times herein mentioned "readily achievable" under the standards of the Americans With Disabilities Act. Because the Restaurant was not accessible, Defendants had an obligation to have some sort of plan which would have allowed Plaintiff to enjoy the Restaurant's services without having to suffer the indignities as aforesaid.
- 26. Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 USC 12188ff, §308, Plaintiff is entitled to the remedies and procedures set forth in §204(a) of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 USC 2000(a)-3(a), as Plaintiff is being subjected to discrimination on the basis of disability in violation of this

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Title or has reasonable grounds for believing that he is about to be subjected to discrimination in violation of §12182. On information and belief, Defendants have continued to violate the law and deny the rights of Plaintiff and of other disabled persons to access this public accommodation since on or before January 23, 2011. Pursuant to §12188(a)(2), "In cases of violations of §12182(b)(2)(A)(iv) ... injunctive relief shall include an order to alter facilities to make such facilities readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities to the extent required by this title."

27. Plaintiff seeks relief pursuant to remedies set forth in §204(a) of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, (42 USC 2000(a)-3(a), and pursuant to Federal Regulations adopted to implement the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Plaintiff is a person for purposes of Section 12188(a) of the ADA who is being subjected to discrimination on the basis of disability in violation of Title III and who has reasonable grounds for believing he will be subjected to such discrimination each time that he may attempt to patronize the Restaurant.

Wherefore Plaintiff prays for relief as hereinafter stated:

PRAYER

1. Issue a preliminary and permanent injunction directing Defendant to modify its facilities as required by law to comply with the ADAAG and the CBC where required, remove all barriers where it is readily achievable to do so, institute policies in furtherance of accessibility or at least have an alternate policy to enable Plaintiff to use the goods and services offered to the non-disabled public so that it provides adequate access to all citizens, including persons with disabilities; and issue a preliminary and permanent injunction directing Defendants to maintain its facilities usable by Plaintiff and similarly situated persons with disabilities in compliance with

federal regulations, and which provide full and equal access, as required by law;

- 2. Retain jurisdiction over the Defendants until such time as the Court is satisfied that Defendant's unlawful policies, practices, acts and omissions, and maintenance of inaccessible public facilities as complained of herein no longer occur, and will not recur;
 - 3. Award to Plaintiff all appropriate statutory damages;
- 4. Award to Plaintiff all reasonable attorneys' fees, all litigation expenses, and all costs of this proceeding as provided by law; and
 - 5. Grant such other and further relief as this Court may deem just and proper.

Date: January 31, 2011

S/Thomas N. Stewart, III______
Attorney for Plaintiff